

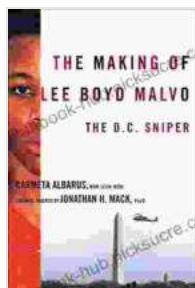
The Sniper: A Detailed Analysis of Liam O'Flaherty's Classic Short Story

Liam O'Flaherty's "The Sniper" is a gripping short story that delves into the complexities of war and the psychological toll it takes on individuals. Set during the Irish Civil War, the story follows a young Republican sniper as he engages in a deadly encounter with an enemy sniper. Through vivid imagery, compelling characterization, and a tight plot structure, O'Flaherty masterfully exposes the horrors of war and its dehumanizing effects.

Literary Analysis

Setting and Atmosphere

The story unfolds in a war-torn city during the Irish Civil War. The setting is one of urban decay, with bombed-out buildings, rubble-strewn streets, and an oppressive atmosphere of violence and danger. The use of lighting techniques further enhances the eerie and sinister atmosphere. The sniper's rooftop vantage point offers him a detached perspective on the chaos below, mirroring his emotional isolation.



The Making of Lee Boyd Malvo: The D.C. Sniper

by Carmeta Albarus

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 4863 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 286 pages
Lending : Enabled



Characterization

The sniper is the central character in the story. He is a young and inexperienced man, torn between his duty to his cause and his own humanity. O'Flaherty portrays the sniper's descent into violence with unflinching realism, revealing the psychological and emotional effects of war. The enemy sniper, on the other hand, remains a faceless adversary, symbolizing the impersonal nature of warfare.

Plot Structure

"The Sniper" is a tightly crafted story with a thrilling plot structure. The action unfolds in real-time, creating a sense of urgency and suspense. The sniper's duel with the enemy sniper serves as the central conflict, building tension with every shot fired. The resolution of the story is both shocking and thought-provoking, leaving the reader with a haunting sense of the futility of war.

Imagery and Symbolism

O'Flaherty's prose is rich in vivid imagery, which intensifies the story's emotional impact. The sniper's "rim of the parapet" becomes a symbolic boundary between life and death, while the "small piece of lime" on the building opposite represents his ultimate target. The use of animalistic imagery also adds to the dehumanizing nature of war.

Themes

War's psychological toll on individuals is the central theme of "The Sniper." O'Flaherty shows how war can erode humanity and turn people into killers. The story also explores the futility of war, as the sniper's actions ultimately lead to his own destruction.

Contextual Background

Irish Civil War

"The Sniper" is set against the backdrop of the Irish Civil War (1922-1923), a conflict between those supporting the Anglo-Irish Treaty and those who opposed it. The war was a bitter and bloody one, and it resulted in the deaths of thousands of people. Liam O'Flaherty himself served in the Irish Republican Army during the war, and his experiences provided the inspiration for many of his short stories.

Irish Literary Tradition

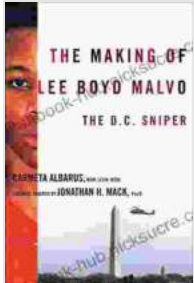
O'Flaherty's "The Sniper" is a significant contribution to the Irish literary tradition. Irish literature often explores themes of war, violence, and the human condition. O'Flaherty's story continues this tradition by providing a powerful and unforgettable account of the horrors of civil war.

Critical Reception and Legacy

"The Sniper" has been widely praised by critics for its powerful narrative, evocative imagery, and haunting exploration of war's themes. It is considered one of Liam O'Flaherty's most famous works and is frequently studied in schools and universities.

Liam O'Flaherty's "The Sniper" is a classic short story that stands the test of time. Through its vivid imagery, compelling characterization, and tight

plot structure, the story reveals the horrors of war and its devastating effects on the human psyche. It is a powerful and unforgettable reminder of the importance of peace and the tragic consequences of conflict.



The Making of Lee Boyd Malvo: The D.C. Sniper

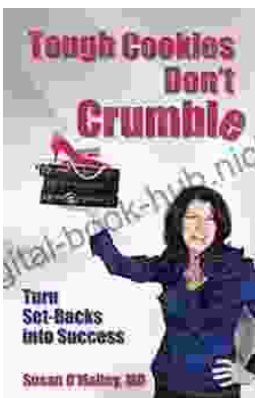
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